

## **FY 2019 Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program**

### **Pre-Application Information Session**

#### **Slide 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Welcome to the Pre-Application Information Session for the Fiscal Year 2019 Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (also referred to as the “LAV Program”). The Office on Violence Against Women (also referred to as “OVW”) is convening this pre-application session to go over the FY 2019 solicitation for the LAV Program.

**Slide 2:** The purpose of this session is to provide information regarding the LAV solicitation. We will highlight a few key points in this solicitation, however it is not the intent, nor is there sufficient time, to go over every aspect of the solicitation. All applicants are responsible for reading the FY 2019 LAV Solicitation and the OVW Solicitation Companion Guide and ensuring that a complete application is submitted. LAV Program staff cannot provide any feedback to applicants about the quality of an applicant’s proposal or provide any information outside of what is presented in the solicitation. However, LAV Program staff will be available throughout the period that the solicitation is open to respond to any questions about application requirements. Please feel free to send questions about the LAV Solicitation to the LAV Program email mailbox at [ovw.lav@usdoj.gov](mailto:ovw.lav@usdoj.gov) or call the main line at 202.307.6026.

It will be helpful to have the LAV Solicitation in front of you for a point of reference during this information session.

#### **Slide 3: ELIGIBILITY**

Eligibility is mentioned on the cover of the solicitation, as well as on pages 4-6. Eligible applicants include private nonprofit entities, publicly funded organizations not acting in a governmental capacity (such as law schools); territorial organizations; Indian tribal governments, including Indian tribal consortia; and Indian tribal organizations.

Both new and continuation applications are being accepted. Grantees that received LAV funding for 36 months in in FY 2017 and 2018 are not eligible to apply.

#### **Slide 4: DEADLINES**

Also on the cover of the solicitation please note that applications are due by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on Thursday, January 31, 2019.

Please refer to pages 19 - 23 of the solicitation for more information on submission and deadlines.

Please note that OVW will not accept late applications, so applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the dates listed on page 20 of the solicitation.

OVW anticipates notifying all applicants of funding decisions by October 1, 2019.

## **Slide 5: REGISTRATION**

You will also note on the cover of the solicitation that you must “register” by January 17, 2019. Registration includes several steps: 1) obtaining a DUNS number, 2) ensuring that you register with the SAM system, and 3) registering on Grants.gov.

Every applicant must obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number and register online with System for Award Management (SAM) well before the grant deadline. There is a reason that we set a deadline of January 17th, as the process to register for a DUNS number and SAM can be lengthy. If you do not have a DUNS number and/or are not current in the SAM system, you should begin this process as soon as possible.

The registration process is not one that can be completed quickly, it can take days and you should begin this process as soon as possible. Every year we have a handful of applicants that did not make the deadline because they were delinquent with their SAM and/or Grants.Gov registrations.

If you are considering applying, a Letter of Intent should be submitted to OWW by January 17, 2019. A letter of Intent is not mandatory; however, they are very helpful to us internally in attempting to identify the potential volume of applications that we can expect and to plan accordingly for the peer review process. Page ii of the solicitation includes a link to a sample of this letter.

## **SUBMISSION AND NOTIFICATION INFORMATION**

LAV applications will be submitted through Grants.gov. If you have questions specific about the registration or submission process through Grants.Gov, please contact Grants.gov customer support at 1-800-518-4726 (this phone number can also be found on page ii of the solicitation and on the Grants.gov website). Grants.Gov customer service is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with the exception of federal holidays.

## **Slide 6: SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Page 1 of the solicitation provides background on the history and goals for the LAV Program.

The LAV Grant Program was created to provide victims access to appropriately trained legal representation designed to meet the broad spectrum of legal issues survivors encounter. Although protection orders play an important role in victim safety, representation in emergency and non-emergency protection order hearings does not address the breadth of legal needs of survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The LAV Grant Program supports the provision of holistic legal services. For example, survivors may also need legal assistance with other legal matters relating to or arising out of the abuse or violence, including family matters such as divorce, child custody or child support, immigration,

administrative agency proceedings, housing, and assistance related to human trafficking as described herein. Any services funded under the LAV Grant Program must be linked to legal assistance. Examples of activities beyond direct legal services that may be supported with LAV funds include:

- Advocacy, as long as the advocate is providing services related to the legal assistance, e.g., safety planning, court accompaniment, preparation for court appearances, and assistance with obtaining resources such as housing, employment, and child care;
- Translation services, if related to the legal services;
- Child care directly related to legal assistance, e.g. child care to enable the victim to meet with his/her attorney or go to court; and
- Transportation related to the legal assistance, e.g., travel to meet with the lawyer or to court.

Please note that LAV Grant Program funds may not be used to provide criminal defense services.

### **Slide 7: Purpose Areas**

Funds under this program must be used for one or more of the following purposes listed in this slide. The FY 2019 LAV Grant Program has 3 Purpose Areas. You will find this information on pages 1- 2 of the solicitation. Please review the purpose areas carefully as project activities funded through the LAV Grant Program must fall under one or more of these Purpose Areas.

You will note that Purpose Area #3 states, “not more than 10 percent of the funds awarded may be used for this purpose” - of pro bono legal assistance. This requirement applies to the entire amount of LAV funding appropriated for the year. This is something that OVW monitors internally. Applicants are not required to limit their proposals to 10% pro bono legal assistance.

### **Slide 8: OVW Priority Areas**

Information regarding the three OVW Priority Areas under the Program can be found on page 2 of the solicitation. In FY 2019, OVW is interested in supporting the priority areas identified in this slide. Applications proposing activities in the following areas will be given special consideration.

### **Slide 9: Activities that Compromise Victim Safety and Recovery**

OVW does not fund activities that jeopardize victim safety, deter or prevent physical or emotional healing for victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibility for their actions. Please refer to the OVW Solicitation Companion Guide for additional details.

Please note, applications that propose any activities that compromise victim safety and recovery or undermine offender accountability may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration entirely.

### **Slide 10: LAV Specific Out-Of-Scope Activities**

The LAV Program has specific out-of-scope activities that will not be supported by this program. We have highlighted a few of these activities in this slide, but a complete list of those activities can be found on pages 2-3 of the solicitation. It is important to review this list thoroughly as applications that propose activities deemed to be substantially out-of-scope may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration.

#### **Slide 11: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

- Section B of the solicitation provides details on the federal award information. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law. There is no guarantee that funds will be available in the future. However, OVW may elect to make awards in a future fiscal year for applications submitted under this solicitation but not selected for FY 2019 funding, depending on the merits of the applications and the availability of funding.
- The grant award period is for 36 months, generally beginning on October 1, 2019.
- Award Amounts will vary. This program typically makes awards in the range of \$600,000 - \$800,000. OVW estimates that it will make up to 54 awards for an estimated \$34,000,000.
  1. New and Continuation LAV Grant Program applications that are proposing to provide legal services primarily to victims of domestic violence or to provide less than 80% of the project's legal services to victims of sexual assault may request up to \$600,000 for the entire 36-month project period.
  2. Please note for FY 2019: New and Continuation LAV Grant Program applications **that are submitted by sexual assault victim service providers** that are proposing to provide 80% or more of the project's legal services to victims of sexual assault, beyond intimate partner sexual assault, may request up to \$800,000 for the entire 36-month project period. In order to be eligible for this amount the lead applicant must be a sexual assault victim service provider.
- Awards will be made as grants.

#### **Slide 12: Eligibility**

- Section C of the solicitation provides additional details on eligibility. Please refer to pages 4-7 on program eligibility requirements. The solicitation provides definitions of eligible entities in the footnote section.
- This slide highlights the other program eligibility requirements such as delivery of legal assistance certification and required partnerships.

If you have additional questions about your eligibility, please review this section carefully as it provides extensive details.

#### **Slide 13: Sexual Assault**

In FY 2019, there is a change in who can apply for \$800,000. In order to be eligible to receive \$800,000 to provide 80% or more legal services to victims of sexual assault, beyond intimate partner sexual assault, the lead applicant must be a sexual assault victim service provider. The definition of a sexual assault victim service provider can be found on page 6 of the solicitation.

These applicants should articulate the specific legal needs of sexual assault survivors within their communities and how project activities would meet those needs. Applications should also reflect the applicant's specialized training and experience in legal matters specific to non-intimate partner sexual assault. Those applying to focus on sexual assault should demonstrate a commitment to addressing non-intimate partner sexual assault and should clearly show that the applicant has the capacity to address the priority effectively. Applicants who state an intent to address sexual assault without a clear demonstration of commitment, capacity and/or expertise to provide sexual assault legal services, beyond intimate partner sexual assault, will not be considered.

#### **Slide 14: Trafficking Requirements**

Applicants can apply to serve individuals who are victims of sex trafficking or victims of both trafficking and domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The applicant should describe the current available legal services for this population and demonstrate its capacity to serve them. It is important to highlight this in the purpose of the application section.

#### **Slide 15: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

- Section D of the solicitation on submission and information begins page 7.
- The complete application package is available on Grants.gov or at the OVW website at <http://www.justice.gov/ovw>. Applicants wishing to request a paper copy of the application materials should contact [ovw.lav@usdoj.gov](mailto:ovw.lav@usdoj.gov) or 202.307.6026.
- Applicants should anticipate that failure to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements will negatively affect the review of the application and may result in the application not being considered for funding. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that a complete application is submitted by the deadline. OVW will not contact applicants for missing items. Applicants should refer to the chart on page 20 of the solicitation to ensure that all required steps and deadlines are met.
- Got extra documents? Well, applicants should not submit documents that were not specifically asked for in the solicitation. Providing information that was not requested (such as letters of support from other organizations in your community or service area) will not increase the likelihood that an application will be selected for funding. So, when in doubt, leave it out.

#### **Slide 16: Formatting and Technical Requirements**

Please carefully review the formatting and technical requirements on page 8. Points may be deducted for applications that do not adhere to the formatting and technical requirements. Please read the entire list of requirements.

#### **Slide 17: Application Requirements**

Applications must include all of the required documents: 1)Project Narrative: This section should provide the reader with the purpose of the application, what will be done, and who in the organization plans to implement this project. Please refer to pages 9-12 of the solicitation for

complete details. 2) Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative: This section should provide the reader with the award period and the amounts should display a clear link to the specific project activities and the proposed budget items. The budget should NOT contain items that are unsupported by the project narrative. A sample budget detail worksheet is available on the OVW website. A link is provided in the solicitation on page 12. 3) Memorandum of Understanding or Statement of Expertise: Please carefully review the distinction between the two and identify which is required and which is optional for the applicant. Please note there are additional questions in the Project Narrative and MOU/Statement of Expertise if an application is addressing sexual assault, trafficking, or stalking.

Applications that do not include all of the three required components will be considered substantially incomplete and will not be considered for funding.

In addition to the application being scored on the three components, the Summary Data Sheet and the Certification Letter will also be scored.

### **Slide 18: Proposal Abstract**

Although this section will not be scored, your application should include an abstract that does not exceed two pages, double-spaced. This section should not be a summary of past accomplishments.

### **Slide 19: Project Narrative**

This section should not exceed 20 pages, and must include the required three sections (purpose of application, what will be done, and who will implement the project).

Note, in order to create a comprehensive coordinated community response to victims, applicants may include additional agencies in their multi-disciplinary partnership, such as law enforcement, state, local, and federal prosecutors, substance abuse organizations, and mental health services. However, these partners are not required and cannot be compensated with grant funds.

### **Slide 20: The Budget**

A budget and budget narrative are required. The narrative can be a separate document or included in the budget together. It must reflect 36 months of project activity and include funds to attend OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance in the amount of \$10,000 for proposals from organizations located within the 48 contiguous states and \$12,000 for organizations located within the territories, Hawaii, or Alaska. Please note this amount is for the entire 36 months and NOT per year. Applicants may budget expenses in excess of the required amount if they are aware of relevant non-OVW sponsored conferences or training for which they would like permission to use grant funds to support staff/project partner attendance.

The budget and the budget narrative will be reviewed separately from the proposed project narrative. The budget narrative must describe each line item requested in the budget and

explain all costs included in the budget, including how the costs of goods and services are determined and how they will fulfill the objectives of the project.

## **Slide 21: Grants Financial Management Division**

The next couple of slides we are going to focus on aspects of your application that relate to the documents that our financial team, the Grants Financial Management Division (GFMD), reviews. More specifically, we'll discuss some items that GFMD has identified from prior year applications that could help with expediting our review process.

So for today, we're going to highlight certain aspects of the pre-award risk assessment and provide you a link to a detailed webinar on how to develop the budget that will be included in your application.

The first things we'll highlight are the items identified in the summary data sheet, which is completed by all applicants.

Specifically, two items we would like to discuss are the Single Audit response and the IRS three step safe harbor procedure.

OVW requests that all applicants provide a statement as to whether they have expended \$750,000 or more in federal funds during their last fiscal year. If they have, then they indicate that and also specify the end date of their last fiscal year. However, GFMD is finding that applicants do not always include this information, and leave out whether or not they have met the threshold, or the end date of the last Fiscal year is not included. Please ensure this question is answered in its entirety on the Summary Data Sheet.

So another item we'd like to highlight from the solicitation is specifically for non profit organizations. If you use the IRS three step safe harbor procedure to determine your executives' compensation, you must reference the additional information section that provides the required disclosure letter. We'd like to highlight that there are 4 parts of this disclosure letter that must be provided to OVW in order to comply with this requirement. The sample letter that outlines all 4 parts of the disclosure, so please be sure to follow the sample and provide a response to each of the four pieces.

**The next item we'd like to discuss are the financial accounting practices, which assists GFMD during their pre award risk assessment review for all applications. Each applicant must prepare a response to ALL TEN QUESTIONS, and each question has MULTIPLE PARTS.**

**We've noticed from prior years that applicants do not always fully answer all parts of the questions, which in turn, requires GFMD to reach out to the applicant which may delay recommendations. Some of the most common issues that we've encountered have been, for example, question #2, where the applicant indicates that they do indeed have internal policies, but they don't provide a brief list of topics covered in the policies and procedures. Another example of incomplete responses include question#3, where the applicant does not provide a brief summary of the organization's process for tracking expenditures, and more specifically whether or not it tracks budgeted versus actual expenditures.**

**So these are just a few examples, but basically, please make sure you read each piece of each question and provide a full and comprehensive response.**

## **Slide 22: Resources**

This next slide will quickly highlight some resources that are available that should be used as you're creating the budget to be submitted with the application.

Over the last year GFMD has worked to develop a detailed webinar presentation on how to assist applicants in developing a budget to be submitted with their OVW applications. They want to help reduce any challenges you may face with the budget and make it clear what they look for when they review your budget, this webinar provides some insight as to what OVW financial staff considers during their review. Use the following link:

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/resources-applicants> . The webinar can be found under the Budget information section on this page.

Next up is the uniform guidance which can be found at 2 CFR 200, then another resource is the DOJ Financial Guide, as well as the program specific solicitation. If you need assistance finding these resources, please contact the GFMD helpdesk.

## **Slide 23: Contact Information**



We know this can be a lot of information to process, so if you have any questions about the GFMD information discussed, please feel free to contact the GFMD helpdesk at 888-514-8556 or by email at [OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov](mailto:OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov).

#### **Slide 24: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) vs Statement of Expertise**

The MOU section can be found beginning on page 13 – 14 of the solicitation.

- For the purposes of this solicitation, the MOU is a document containing the terms of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities between two or more parties. The MOU must be a single document and must be signed and dated by the Authorized Representative of each proposed partner organization during the development of the application.
- A sexual assault and/or domestic violence victim service provider partner must be involved in the development and implementation of the project.
- If the lead applicant is an organization with a primary mission to provide services to victims of crime generally, a community action agency, a community-based improvement corporation, a law school, or a legal services program, then the lead applicant must partner with a sexual assault and/or domestic violence service provider.
- Please review the sexual assault, trafficking, and stalking priority area requirements for the MOU on page 14 of the solicitation.

The Statement of Expertise section can be found on pages 14-15 of the solicitation.

- Lead applicants that are nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal victim service providers or governmental rape crisis centers that, as their primary mission, provide services to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking victims may submit a Statement of Expertise in lieu of an MOU if they demonstrate that they provide legal representation for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking.
- If you are a victim service provider who will be contracting with individual attorneys and not a legal services organization, then you can submit a Statement of Expertise (not an MOU), but you should demonstrate in the Statement of Expertise the experience of the attorneys that will be providing legal services.
- Please review the sexual assault, trafficking, and stalking priority area requirements for the SOE on page 15 of the solicitation.

#### **Slide 25: Statutory Requirements**

To be eligible for an award under the LAV Grant Program, applicants must certify in writing that they are in compliance with statutory requirements outlined in “Other Program Eligibility Requirements” section.

- This certification must be in the form of a letter on agency letterhead and signed (electronic or typed signatures do not satisfy this requirement) and dated by the authorizing official.

- The signed Certification Letter must be uploaded as a separate attachment in Grants.gov.

#### **Slide 26: Additional Required Information**

Pages 15-19 provide additional documents that will not be scored during the review process but they should be included with your application. Failure to include any of the information may result in your application being removed from consideration from funding. Please review this section carefully.

#### **Slide 27: Submission Dates and Times**

Applications are due by 11:59 pm Eastern time on Thursday, January 31, 2019.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the application submission process at least 48 hours but no later than 24 hours before January 31, 2019.

As a reminder, **all** applicants must obtain a DUNS Number, register online with the SAM system and Grants.gov. Letters of Intent are optional, but should be submitted no later than January 17th.

#### **Slide 28: OVW Policy on Duplicate Applications**

Please note applicants should only submit one application per program. If an applicant submits multiple versions of an application, OVW will review the most recent version submitted.

#### **Slide 29: OVW Policy on Late Submissions**

OVW offers several options for an applicant to provide advance notice of a delayed application. Applicants should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the requirements as outlined by OVW in the chart on pages 20-22. An applicant's request to submit an application after the deadline will be considered by OVW if all of the steps outlined in the solicitation are followed. Only in rare circumstances are extensions granted. Failure to begin the registration or application submission process in sufficient time is not an acceptable reason for a late application submission.

#### **Slide 30: Funding Restrictions**

OVW has a list of funding restrictions that is provided on page 23 of the solicitation that will allow applicants to develop an application and budget consistent with program requirements. Restrictions include, Unallowable Costs, Food and Beverage/Costs for Refreshments and Meals, Conference Planning and Expenditure Limitations, and Program Assessments. Unallowable cost should not be included in the applicants' budgets.

#### **Slide 31: Pre-Agreement Cost Approval**

OVW generally does not allow pre-award costs. Costs incurred prior to the start date of the award may not be charged to the project unless the recipient receives prior approval from OVW.

Please see the DOJ Financial Guide for more information on pre-award costs (there is a link to financial guide on page 24 of the solicitation).

**Please note there are other Submission Requirements on the bottom of page 24:** Please review this section carefully to ensure your ability to submit your application on time.

#### **Slide 32: SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

Eligible and qualifying applications will be subject to a peer review and a programmatic review. Applications will be scored based on the degree to which the application responds to each section and addresses each element in the section. Furthermore, applications will be scored based upon the quality of the response and the level of detail provided. Each element must be addressed in the section in which it is requested. Points may be deducted if the applicant does not include the information in the appropriate section even if it is included elsewhere within the application. Each section will be reviewed as a separate document and will be scored as such.

Information regarding the Review and Selection Process begins on page 25.

#### **Slide 33: SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

##### **Federal Award Notices**

Successful applications will receive OVW award notifications electronically from the OJP Grants Management System (GMS) (not grants.gov). This award notification will be sent to the individuals listed as the Authorized Representative and the Point of Contact on the SF-424 for the application that was selected for funding and will include instructions on accepting the award. Recipients will be required to login; accept any outstanding assurances and certifications on the award; designate financial points of contact; and review, sign, and accept the award. The award acceptance process involves physical signature of the award document and terms and conditions by the Authorized Representative and the scanning of the fully executed award document to OVW.

#### **Slide 34: Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

There are a number of Administrative and National Policy Requirements listed on pages 27-28 of the solicitation. You should review these carefully.

#### **Slide 35: Checklist**

Please use the Application Checklist on page 28 of the solicitation. This checklist will help you ensure that all required documents are included in your application. Ensure that you included all required documents. Please make sure your Point of Contact (POC) listed in grants.gov is responsive to emails and alerts.

#### **Slide 36: Helpful Tips Checklist**

Lastly we have some tips that may improve your chances on becoming an LAV grant recipient. Please note that following list is not a guarantee that you will be funded, but it is included as a guide to navigate you through the OVW application process.

- Please read the solicitation in its entirety. It is important to make sure you do not miss out on any important information by just skimming through the solicitation and just focusing on the “How to Apply” section. Read the application and contact LAV staff if you have any questions.
- Allow plenty of time to gather required information and submit well before the deadline. Although this is not required, more time will allow for any unforeseen obstacles such as power outages and natural disasters.
- A missing or incorrect DUNS number or an expired SAM registration are some of the reasons an application may get rejected. Applications can also be rejected if files are saved inappropriately, e.g., files with names that exceed the Grants.gov 50 character limit or that include special characters. Please ensure you are following the requirements with Grants.gov. If you have any technical questions, please reach out to Grants.gov directly for troubleshooting or feedback.
- Headings can be a big deal to the reviewer. It is important to keep your audience in mind and make it easy for them to read and review your application. Use the heading and sub-heading titles that are in the solicitation. This will help the reviewer more easily follow the application.
- Please keep in mind the reviewers will use only the information contained in the application to assess the application. Be sure the application and responses to the program requirements and expectations are complete and clearly written. Do not assume that reviewers are familiar with your organization, service area or barriers to legal needs in your community. Keep the reviewer in mind when writing the application.
- Organization. Organization. Organization. I can not stress this enough. Many applications fail to receive a high score because the reviewers cannot follow the thought process of the applicant or because parts of the application do not fit together. Treat it like a puzzle. Let the pieces properly fall into place.
- What are the issues in your community that you are trying to address? Is it in line with the purpose area or OVW priority area? Make your points understandable. Provide accurate and honest information, including candid accounts of problems and realistic plans to address them. If any required information or data is omitted, explain why. Your budget should also reflect back to the proposed activities.
- Print out the application before submitting it to ensure appropriate formatting and adherence to page limit requirements. Check to ensure that you included all attachments before submitting the application. Also, number your pages in your application. This will also help the reviewer track and insure you are following the solicitation formatting and instructions. Don't risk points for something as simple as formatting.
- Be sure to include all of the necessary attachments and label them appropriately when uploading them to the system. Cross check and double check. Points will be taken off for those items missing that are required.

- Use acronyms judiciously, if at all. Remember that the reviewers are not familiar with your community and will not be familiar with the acronyms that your organization and project partners may use.
- If your name and contact information is listed as the POC, please monitor your inbox. There are times that the system may reject your application and you will need to make sure you are getting those alerts.

**Slide 37:** Good Luck! If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.